THE LIBRARY, ST. CHARLES SEMINARY, CARLISLE, PA.

The Commonweal

June 29, 1951

The Middle East

Background for the Iran Dispute

M. A. FITZSIMONS

Hilaire Belloc

The Last of the Grand Old Men

DONALD ATTWATER

A Shaky Case for the AMA

A Labor Czar Speaks for the Medicos

FRANCIS DOWNING

Volume LIV **15c** *Number 12*

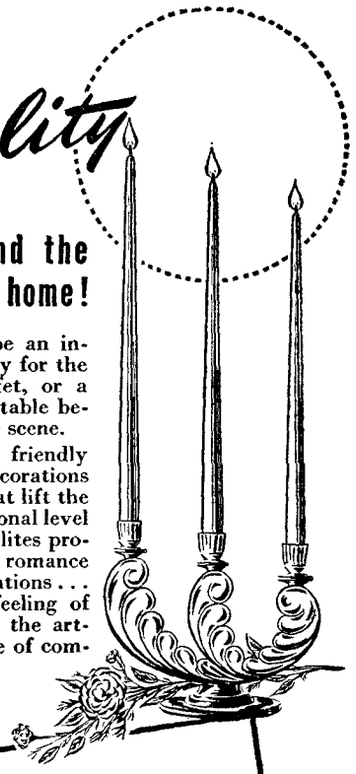
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Fine Art of *Hospitality*

. . . centers around the social axis of the home!

Whether the occasion be an informal supper, a coke party for the youngsters, a simple buffet, or a formal dinner, the dining table becomes the social axis of the scene.

Make it gay, inviting, friendly with Taperlites: Simple decorations that add a festive note, that lift the plainest menu to the emotional level of a grand occasion. Taperlites provide the light, beauty and romance to captivate young imaginations . . . encourage an expansive feeling of gaiety, and compete with the artfully contrived atmosphere of commercialized entertainment.



Encourage the Art of Simple, Home Entertainment Among the Young

Friendly home gatherings and simple entertainment play an important role in the social context of a civilized and ordered life. But they call for a developed taste, a confident approach and a practiced hand—graces that should be cultivated daily, especially among the young. Taperlites on the dinner table every evening help to create an attitude and an atmosphere that turn young minds homeward for wholesome social contacts and simple fun.

● Buy TAPERLITES in a variety of colors and sizes at your grocer's or drugstore. Recognize them by the handy two-pack container and the exclusive FIRM-FIT end that holds them proudly upright.

Will & Baumer

CANDLE CO. INC.

SYRACUSE BOSTON NEW YORK CHICAGO
MONTREAL LOS ANGELES

CANDLE CRAFTSMEN FOR NEARLY A HUNDRED YEARS

• THIS WEEK •

Week by Week 275

The Middle East
by M. A. Fitzsimons 279

Hilaire Belloc, Grand Old Man
by Donald Attwater 282

A Shaky Case for the AMA
by Francis Downing 283

The Stage
by Walter Kerr 285

The Screen
by Philip T. Hartung 286

Communications 287

An English View of French Novels 287
by Serge Hughes

Books 290

Editor: Edward S. Skillin
Contributing Editor: Philip Burnham
Managing Editor: Edward F. Meagher
Feature Editor: John Cogley
Assistant Editor: William Pfaff

Associate Editors
John C. Cort, Anne Fremantle, Francis Downing
Cinema: Philip T. Hartung
Theatre: Walter Kerr

Advertising Manager: John Brubaker

Published weekly, printed and copyrighted, 1951, in the U. S. A., by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y. MUrray Hill 3-9685. Entered as second-class matter, February 9, 1934, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. U. S. and Canada, $7 a year; Foreign $8. Single copies, 15c.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Commonweal

WEEK BY WEEK

Matter for Compromise?

THERE are times when it is hard to square what happens in our courts with the basic principle of English (and American) common law that a man stands before his peers as innocent until he has been proved guilty. The newspapers do exercise great care in pre-judging a case; they avoid libel suits by tacking on the word "alleged" to every reference to implication in a crime. But in the main the pressures seem all against the prisoner. Otherwise it would be impossible to explain what has befallen the six men charged with murdering elderly William Horner in a hold-up of his second-hand furniture store in Trenton, N. J., January 27, 1948.

All six of the accused were Negroes, born in the South; only one of them had been educated beyond grammar school (Collis English, now sentenced to life imprisonment at hard labor). There is every indication that the police decided *a priori* that the men were guilty. Shortly after the murder, Trenton police had picked up English for driving his estranged father's car without permission; through "questioning" they led him to "confess" and to implicate the others in Horner's murder. Three of the "confessions" the prosecution offered in court as proof were so obviously spurious that Judge Smalley of the Mercer County Superior Court refused to admit them as evidence. There was also ample testimony to the effect that the five defendants who signed confessions had been drugged or intimidated by the police.

But how did they fare in the courts? In the first trial three years ago there were extraneous issues. Only the Communists had stepped forward on behalf of these accused men then. So that the first trial involved a duel between the Civil Rights Congress and the Trenton Police Department. In any event, after three hours of deliberation a jury pronounced all the defendants guilty as charged, and they were sentenced to death. This verdict was upset in a higher state court on the grounds of "irregularities."

The new trial just concluded took fifteen weeks to review the evidence—it was the longest murder trial in the history of New Jersey. The jury stayed out for twenty hours this time before reaching a verdict. Yet certain doubts persist.

It may be presumed that the jury's first vote reflected the effect of weeks of evidence upon each of the twelve men and women. Seven voted that all defendants were guilty and five that all were innocent. How could the majority have reached such a conclusion when four of the accused had water-tight alibis substantiated by numerous disinterested witnesses? (It was the misfortune of the other two, English and Cooper, to have been at home or making a call the morning the murder was committed; their alibis were therefore supported mainly by immediate families and friends).

Moreover, the victim's widow, who was beaten up when her common-law husband was murdered, admitted under cross-examination that she was unable to identify a single one of the defendants from a police line-up only ten days after the crime. The defendants who signed confessions all repudiated them and much doubt was cast on the genuineness of these statements by experts. It was even strongly alleged that the police had destroyed fingerprint evidence that would have freed the men. There were several other glaring weaknesses in the prosecution's case. Yet seven of the jurors were convinced that the accused were guilty as charged.

AS the long night wore on and ballot after ballot was taken, six of the jurors stood solidly for acquittal, while two hung on doggedly for a verdict of guilty, for all of the defendants. No real compromise is possible on a straight question of fact. Yet the jury resolved the issue by condemning Cooper and English. The six men and six women had been isolated from their families for over three months, and now they had been debating the verdict for hours without letup. The pressure to reach a decision was over-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

powering. As a token of their doubts they recommended clemency (although the murder itself was a brutal one)—a recommendation that made life sentences mandatory.

The New York *Times* cites all this as "an example of the American trial system working in the way that it ought to work." But what of all that the four acquitted men suffered in their forty months of incarceration, eleven of them in the death house, for a crime with which they had no connection? And what of the two victims of the jury's "compromise"? Suppose the disinterested citizen's committee, which has footed the expenditures required by the defense, is not able to raise the funds to appeal the decision? (Printing costs alone would come to $35,000.) It has not been convincingly demonstrated that either Cooper or English is guilty. About all we can take legitimate satisfaction in is that a more extensive injustice was not done.

A Place to Intervene

THE FACT that the Korean peninsula is the battleground for the first large-scale international attempt to preserve collective security by force inevitably means that the people of Korea have to undergo untold sufferings. During the past year their land has been devastated and their homes destroyed; they have had to flee with a few pitiful belongings as the tide of battle surged forward and receded—many thousands of them have had to take refuge on nearby islands in special camps. In twelve months time the number of Korean soldiers and civilians killed in battle has run into the hundreds of thousands on both sides of the line.

The United Nations therefore has a special obligation to undertake reconstruction on a major scale at the earliest possible moment. Sizable funds are already earmarked for the purpose. And the relatively stabilized military situation would seem to justify beginning the work in South Korea immediately at a safe distance from the mildly fluctuating battle lines. The peoples of Asia will focus attention on the war-scarred peninsula long after hostilities cease. They will want to know whether resistance to Communism is actually worth the candle. Our task is obvious.

But in the meantime reports from South Korea indicate conditions that are not only appalling in themselves but also will make the task of rehabilitation doubly difficult. For months there have been sporadic reports of local massacres of civilians charged with Communist sympathies—men, women and infants—by South Korean soldiery. Now we have an unconfirmed yet undenied report that 50,000 South Korean draftees have died of starvation and disease, while five times that number have been made "physical wrecks incapable of labor," only since December. The charge of Su Min Ho, chairman of a South Korean investigating committee, is that corrupt officers of the Korean National Guard have made off with $2,000,000 in funds appropriated for the sustenance of these draftees.

Is such a situation the sort of occasion for American authorities to take refuge in a policy of strict non-interference? If such crimes are permitted now, when American troops and other UN contingents are in such force on the peninsula, how can there be peace and order in Korea when the bulk of our forces is withdrawn?

Our military authorities apparently do not hesitate to intervene to the extent of moving civilians around by the thousands. Even now they are clearing a broad strip several miles wide on both sides of the 38th parallel of all civilians (in preparation for the long-awaited truce?). They are doing this—as they continue to fight—in close conjunction with the South Korean Army. What transpires in South Korea would therefore seem to be of vital interest both to the United States and the United Nations. If the plan is, once Korean hostilities have ceased, to build up an adequate native defense force and have it trained by American officers, it would hardly seem inappropriate to have some of our officers at South Korean training camps now, to prevent the recurrence of similar catastrophes. A solution for Korea would seem to demand a firm supervising hand even now when the UN troops are steadily wearing down the Chinese Communist and North Korean forces.

• NEXT WEEK •

GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN, from Rome, interprets the results of the recent municipal elections in various parts of Italy and calls the outcome "no progress against Communism."

"How is it possible that the millions of dollars expended in Italy under ERP since the last elections have had no appreciable effect on the appeal of Communism? And how it is possible that the recent warnings of the Church against Communism have had such poor results?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Second Chance in Asia

IN JULY, 1945, several weeks before the Japanese signed the articles of surrender on the battleship Missouri, the Military Intelligence Agency of the US War Department submitted a secret report analyzing the Chinese Communist movement and forecasting the prospects for peace in the Far East. The report said that "the type of peace we shall gain by our victory over Japan depends on our success in aiding the Chinese to regain complete independence and to establish unity. For China is the center of the Far East; political, economic and military relationships in the Far East have always revolved around China."

Today, with "the center of the Far East" no longer within the range of our influence, we are obliged to shift the emphasis of our policy in Asia from the Chinese center to the non-Communist countries lying in an arc on the periphery of China. American aid is being sent to Indo-China, the Philippines, Formosa, Korea and Japan, and we are preparing new defense arrangements with Australia, New Zealand and Japan. What we are trying to do now is to check the outward pressure of war and revolution being exerted against all of Asia by the Chinese Communists from their strategic position at the center of the Far East.

It is hard to see how we can check this pressure so long as Japan, the strongest potential power in the non-Communist arc, remains as it is today, a power vacuum. It is for this reason that it has become an urgent matter to sign a peace treaty with Japan and to fill that vacuum with Japanese manpower.

After this peace treaty is signed, the Japanese will, of course, have the political freedom to express themselves as they wish and, so far as the free world is concerned, it will be a matter of no little interest to know how the Japanese will express themselves as to issues of foreign policy. Although the United States will retain bases in Japan, the fact remains that Japan cannot be a reliable ally unless the Japanese people are a willing partner of the non-Communist powers. What happens in Japan now will greatly determine the success of our policy in Asia, and consequently it is to our interest to become familiar with Japanese affairs now, and not, as was the case with China, five or six years too late.

Japanese foreign policy will be made to a great extent by the political parties that have emerged there since 1945 under the guidance of the Occupation. The four major parties to appear have been the Liberals, the People's Democratic Party, the Social Democrats and the Communists. The Liberals and the People's Democratic Party are both conservative, free-enterprise parties and they are inclined to identify their interests in the cold war with those of the United States in what they think of, in economic terms at least, as a struggle for the survival of a free economy. The Social Democrats are a socialist party along the lines of the British Labor Party; their foreign policy is neutralist, in somewhat the same way Prime Minister Nehru's policy is neutralist. It is reported that there is a strong feeling among the Japanese people to the effect that they have nothing to expect but destruction from any new war, and it seems likely, therefore, that the Social Democrats, who are mostly opposed to Japanese rearmament and to the granting of military bases to the United States, will find considerable support among the people for their neutralist position. The Communist Party, although it is now largely suppressed, argues the familiar Kremlin line; in the 1949 elections it managed to get 12 per cent of the vote.

These, then, are the main Japanese political forces that will be set in motion with the signing of the peace treaty and it is with them that we will have to work if we are to check Communist aggression in Asia. At the moment, the Liberals are the majority party in Japan, and since they favor Japanese rearmament, we are likely to have an initial opportunity to counteract the appeal of neutralism by creating a sense of security among a rearmed Japanese people. But the dangers of rearmament are serious ones: the Japanese economy is not yet strong enough to bear too heavy a weight of rearmament costs; the United States cannot afford to identify itself with conservative business interests to the neglect of urgent social and economic reforms; the Japanese army cannot be allowed to attain too independent a position; and finally, protecting Japan will involve our own armed forces at a vulnerable point in Asia.

All of these risks, however formidable, will have to be taken and surmounted, it seems to us, since the over-all objective of United States policy in the Far East makes a rearmed and secure Japan an urgent necessity. How resolutely we give leadership to this course of action and how successful we are in making Japan an ally within the framework of collective security, may well determine the fate of the free life in Asia for all the foreseeable future. We dare not fail in Japan as we have failed in China.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sights and Sounds

WHEN you earn your living by your pen, or even hope to, your mind becomes something like an untidy filing case after awhile. You are walking down the street, maybe, and there are a dozen others walking with you and just for a minute everyone's attention is caught by some sight or incident that makes this walk on this street a little different from all the walks that have been or will be. The others smile or wince, as the case may be, and go on about their business. If they think of it maybe it will be mentioned at the dinner table that evening. But the one who writes, or hopes to, makes a mental note to keep the scene in his memory, because it is typical or significant or symbolic or something like that. In most cases, I suppose, it is buried forever. Occasionally it will be unearthed, a forgotten treasure, when a man is staring hopefully at blank white paper, waiting for the apt metaphor, the persuasive example or the symbolic detail to rise to the surface.

There is a small shoe-repair shop on Fourth Avenue, and when the five o'clock crowd was going home the other evening, the door to the shop was open but the shop was empty of customers. The proprietor of the place was sitting alone in a dark corner playing a violin. The violin was off-key and the man played badly and the name of the song reaching the street was "Jeannie with the Light-Brown Hair." It was a slight thing yet undoubtedly it added a warm human note to the scene on Fourth Avenue at that hour when everything is hurry, efficiency and drive. A simple thing—man plays violin, plays it badly, plays a hackneyed air—but the people passing seemed surprised and almost embarrassed.

The thing was a touch too Saroyan maybe, but there it was. I thought about it later and that night I even got out the torn old copy of *The Man on the Flying Trapeze*.

That's all. When he was young, Saroyan might have made something warm and tender out of it. I didn't; probably couldn't. Still it was filed away, and when it came time to write this page there it was and now it's on paper.

There is a convent of contemplative nuns a few blocks from this office. On all sides of the convent, stone and steel—office buildings, commercial hotels, restaurants, taverns. You almost never see a child on the streets and there isn't a tree anywhere around. It isn't Lisieux or Paray-le-Monial, it's East 28th Street, Manhattan. But the contemplatives are there and their seven-story mountains.

Those nuns, the convent in that surprising location—surely there is significance there, and reason for hope. Can a writer, even a hack journalist, pass the place twice a day as if it had no more meaning than the Latham Hotel across the street or the Chock Full o'Nuts on the corner?

Across the street from THE COMMONWEAL are the offices of the New York Life Insurance Company. We see each other all day long, the people here and the people over there, and we watch each other's movements. From the desk to the filing cabinet to the water cooler, back to the desk. But there is a silence between us. The plan of their movements is meaningless to us and ours to them. From the windows our separate 9 to 5 dedications look as absurd as the frantic labors of a colony of ants to a picnicker. Sometimes looking over there is like looking in a mirror. The better part of wisdom then seems to be to go out and get a beer or stop in at the convent on 28th Street and study the white motionless figures before the altar.

You see what I mean? A man spends his days somewhere and no matter where it is there are sights and sounds and passing impressions that keep bobbing up to the surface every time he sits down before a blank sheet of paper. For him at least, they seem to have symbolic relevance to the big news items, the important decisions, the march of current history—the stuff of opinion journalism.

Lately I keep harking back to a vivid impression from the later days of the war. I was a patient in an army hospital in Atlantic City, New Jersey. At that time, late 1944 and early 1945, the hospital specialized in amputee cases. Men who lost an arm or leg were flown back from the war theatres to New Jersey. There they were treated and fitted for prosthetic limbs. Sometimes there was a long delay, either because of shortages or because the men were not yet ready to wear the artificial arms or legs. Anyway there were hundreds of amputee cases hopping around the wards on crutches. In those surroundings a whole soldier came to feel somewhat ashamed of his wholeness. Those who had something missing outnumbered the rest of us. More than one man falsely claimed to have been made impotent in order to get the sympathy and share in the fraternity of the amputees.

At Christmas everyone who could navigate at all was given a three-day pass. I remember that the streets were icy and what a strange military march it was that started off for the railroad station at the set hour. The legless hobbled on uncertain new crutches, slipping and falling while they cheerfully cursed the army and the war and the whole miserable world. The armless tried to get them to their feet again.

This was Christmastide and these GI's were going home, some for their first pass, so there was a boisterous note of holiday, despite the grim, somewhat weird scene on the street. At the station, more slips and falls, laughter and curses, with the men without arms and the men without legs trying to get each other settled in the cars while the few whole ones stood by, foolish and ineffectual because they knew there was a camaraderie they could have no part in and if they offered to help they only called attention to their wholeness.

That was a scene, an impression left on the mind, probably for a lifetime. Even at the time it seemed to be highly symbolic. Nothing in the newspapers today makes it any less so. Maybe that is why again and again the memory of it has come to the surface when the time comes for this page to be written.

JOHN COGLEY.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Middle East

The stakes are high and political bargaining, to the point of danger, is the order of the day.

By M. A. FITZSIMONS

HEATED comment on Britain's Iranian difficulties has not had the effect of making clear what general interest the Western world has in the Middle East. Our interest in this area, which runs from the eastern Mediterranean and its approaches — Greece, Libya and Egypt—to the Persian Gulf, an area that bounds the Soviet world along the Greek, Turkish and Iranian frontiers, is threefold, First, there is the material interest of Britain and the United States in Middle Eastern oil. Britain has invested some £350,000,000 in Iranian oil and the loss of this would be a heavy economic blow to a country barely achieving recovery and already facing new storms. Anglo-Iranian oil provides a large part of British fuel and oil products as well as a substantial amount of Western Europe's fuel. Militarily, the Iranian and Middle Eastern oilfields are not defensible against a large Soviet attack and probably will not soon be made so. Loss of part or all of Iranian, Iraqi and Saudi Arabian oil would be a grievous, but not an overwhelming, blow to the West.

Second, is the interest we have in preventing the Soviet Union from reaching the Mediterranean, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. Here, apart from the military strength and determination of Turkey, the only deterrent to the Soviet Union is the strength of the West. By its own resources the area can not be defended. Its loss, also, need not be overwhelming. But Soviet success in Iran might make Turkish resistance appear hopeless and shake the uncertain will of France and Italy, while Soviet access to the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea would endanger Africa and menace any European trade with India, Malaya and Indonesia.

The third interest is both more abstract and more vital—and that is, to convince the Middle East of the dignity and capacity of Western democracy. It may, indeed, be folly to hope to crush the idea of Communism by force of arms. But the cold war involves a conflict of ideas, and our ideas must persuade and convince, both by reason and example. It would be foolhardy to maintain that we have done much along those lines since the inception of the Marshall Plan. Such a struggle of ideas will be full of setbacks and disillusionments, but the alternative is surely a defeatism about other men which will soon corrode our very belief in ourselves.

In this region Czarist and Communist imperialism has largely been a tale of failure.

The Middle East is a region which, in its Moslem character, may be said to extend to Malaya and Pakistan. This was the arena for the first encounters of the cold war. The initial Soviet efforts in Iran (1945-46) were defeated. Russia's attempt (1944) to draw Greece into its orbit and thus to control the approaches to the Levant was similarly defeated. Later Soviet demands for bases in Turkey, Libya and the Dodecanese were denied. These victories for the West tend to counterbalance, to some extent, the disasters in Asia. But the Middle East remains disturbed, less as a result of Communist strength —though the Soviet menace has placed heavy military burdens on Greece, Turkey and Iran— than as the result of domestic incompetence, instability and nationalist frustration. The social structure itself, however, apart from the cities, still depends on the leadership of the local landowner and this structure has not disintegrated.

★

THE MAJOR problems of the Middle East were well known before the end of the war. But Britain, the power most directly concerned with this region, has been busy with the grimmer work of economic survival and with the liquidation of its Asiatic empire, a process which enormously transformed its strategic position in the Middle East. Military intervention in Iran would outrage contemporary sentiments of anti-imperialism. More than that, for Britain, deprived of an Indian army and bases, such intervention is unthinkable. Foreign Secretary Morrison's warning that Britain would not suffer outright expropriation was justified, to be sure, but as a threat, his statement veiled perplexity more than it indicated determination. The dispatch of paratroopers to Cyprus represented an attempt to be ready for the worst rather than a big-stick attitude.

M. A. FITZSIMONS, a member of the History Department at Notre Dame, is now in England, where he is engaged in research work.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In the face of Soviet pressure the British have struggled with considerable success to hold on to their Middle Eastern bases and material interests. This minimum program has permitted little scope for flexibility, imagination or generosity in confronting Middle Eastern problems. Traditionally, the British government thought of the Middle East as a transit area, a place where, in Palmerston's words, it looked for secure passage, and, so to speak, good roads and clean hotels. After Britain had fostered the Arab Revolt in World War I in order to destroy the Turkish Empire, the Arab world was broken into small and impotent parts. The Palestine Mandate and British oil interests made Britain the obvious butt of Arab nationalist movements.

To make matters worse, although the United States succeeded to Britain's role in Greece and Turkey, Britain and the United States worked at cross-purposes in Palestine. Britain sought to associate herself with the majority force, the Arabs, and, thereby, was unable to satisfy Zionist ambitions. But with the success of Zionism, the Arab League was reduced to demagogic frustration and voluble, if not very potent, opposition to all foreign influence, including Britain.

★

NOW that Israel is established, Britain and the United States can cooperate, but if their cooperation is to be fruitful, it must be based on a sustained policy which confronts the needs and realities of the Middle East and which involves the genuine cooperation of Britain, the United States and Middle Eastern countries. To date there has been no such policy. Emergency and *ad hoc* measures will prove expensive and ineffective. If the cold war continues, the stability of the Middle East is an essential Western interest. But stability will not come easily or soon. Basic to its achievement is a change in Western policy which will mark the passing of the West from the defensive to the offensive.

British difficulties in accepting the nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian oil fields and the continuing problem of reaching an accord with Egypt are uncovering this weakness of the West in waging the cold war. It is certain that no Middle Eastern state has any clear notion of what the United States will do and it is a safe guess that even Britain is hazy about our long-range views on the region. In spite of the containment policy the actions of Britain and the United States are defensive, the improvisations of the besieged, not the measures of those carrying the war to the enemy. A preoccupation with private affairs, which democracy encourages, makes this approach perhaps understandable. Secretary Acheson has talked about total diplomacy but, as a rule, the Soviet Union has the initiative and each crisis comes as a shock for which the Western world is manifestly unprepared. Total diplomacy has remained a slogan, even without the semblance of life which envelops the Point IV Program.

This defensive posture is, in part, inescapable, because the world's democracies can not be so ruthless and dishonest as the Soviet Union. The latter can hold up a utopian ideal and, at home and abroad, point constantly to the failures and contradictions of the free world. The United States and Britain cannot talk of a 'final conflict' which is to resolve all major problems, but can only promise the prospect of slow material improvement and the not always welcome possibility of being responsible for one's own government. This moderation in objectives is poor fare for the activists and masses of the Middle and Far East, who, in Nehru's words, are running to catch up with the achievements of industrialism and science.

Moreover, the antagonists in the cold war have very different goals. The United States is officially committed to contain Communism in the hope that a permanent restraint of its expansionism will change its character. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, is not only bent on expansionism wherever possible, but is at war with the ideas of any world except its own.

Finally, in view of the global scale of the battleground, it is difficult for the United States to provide military guarantees against Communist excursions everywhere. This is particularly true of Asia and the Middle East, where there is no point of strength to reenforce. Substantial military assistance has been given to Greece and Turkey, and to a small extent to Iran, but, thus far, a Mediterranean Pact has not seemed feasible.

★

THEIR very weakness does not prevent the Middle Eastern countries from taking advantage of the cold war. The Soviet Union has little to offer them, but, like Egypt, Syria and Iraq, they can alternately blow hot and cold towards the West in order to gain concessions of two major kinds. Foremost is the desire to be rid of all forms of tutelage, colonialism and imperialism. The expression of this sweeping and apparently irresistible urge ranges from Egypt's attempt to free its territory of British troops to Iran's nationalization of the oil fields, for the anti-foreign nationalism of countries without large capital resources readily identifies nationalization with independence. Syria has recently nationalized a number of public utilities. Egypt has strict laws about the share Egyptians must have in all Egyptian companies, and may yet attempt to oust the British from the Canal Zone by nation-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

alizing the Canal. Iraq, following Iran's example, will soon bid for more control of its oil.

The second type of concession sought by the Middle Eastern countries is based on a hope of extending the Marshall and Point IV Programs to a United States-sponsored global economic development scheme. This second expectation is to be found in India, the Middle East and most of Latin America. It poses the most perplexing psychological and economic problems for the United States, since the expectation is thought of as a human right, not as a favor to be sought. The sensitively proud are inclined to hate both those who ignore their needs and those who seek to help them. Although this phenomenon is world-wide, in the Middle East the stakes are higher, for the area is directly menaced and the bargaining, in Levantine fashion, is pursued to the point of danger. Thus, the more serious the West is in seeking to check Communism, the more concessions will be demanded.

During the war the Arab world was given an unusually large number of intimations about future help. These were British promises, often unofficial, but made in gratitude for the relative quiet of the Arab world in the face of Britain's peril. Many brave plans were discussed, and came to nothing when peace returned. Britain was too impoverished after the war. When the first impetus of the cold war struck the British, strategic considerations had to take precedence over development plans.

Thus, the Middle East has known high hopes, disappointment and compounded frustration. Its nationalism has increased, and, in the absence of constructive achievement and with the contrast of Israel's progress, its politicians have played on nationalism and xenophobia to the limit. A politician in office cannot afford to be moderate and responsible. If he is, his rivals will outbid and oust him. If he is, he may suffer the fate of Iran's assassinated Razmara, whose latest successor, the fanatical Dr. Mossadegh, lives in fear of still greater extremists. A slightly more cheerful aspect to this picture is the obvious fact that some Egyptian politicians do not take their own propaganda seriously. Of course, they may create a situation in which they will have to. In Iran, too, doubtless many deputies voted for nationalization to escape assassination and still others supported it to distract attention from their own records.

★

VERY little can be done to abate immediately this feverish nationalism, which thrives on discontent and screens incompetence and dishonesty. The Western world cannot safely deny its own principles by the domineering use of force, nor does it have the strength to do so in the Middle East. But carefully supervised financial and technical assistance and a consistent and responsible policy may still convince the Arab world of our genuine interest in our brothers. The supervision of financial aid poses a delicate problem, but its necessity is inescapable. Unsupervised aid might be wholly wasted. In addition to supervision, aid might also be made contingent upon various reforms in financial policy and administration. To present such offers without giving offense will call for diplomatic skill of a high order. But the offer and the example may revive some of that sense of partnership with the West that prevailed during the war.

In this field our own record is rather confusing. There was much talk of large-scale assistance in 1949 centering around plans drawn up by George McGhee of the State Department. Practically nothing came of them. It is also true that even before nationalization Iran's administrative and financial record caused that country to appear as a most undeserving beneficiary.

The need of aid cannot be denied. The United Nations representative of Lebanon, Mr. Malik, aptly described the 'hand-to-mouth' economy of the area: "To increase its consumption goods it needs to increase its investment goods, but to increase its investment goods it needs to increase its consumption goods. . . . The process will inevitably be lengthy, strenuous and painful."

★

IN the early stages the assistance cannot be on a large scale. Pilot projects are necessary to train the workers of the area and to discover special local problems. The failure of Britain's peanuts and poultry plans in Africa are largely attributable to neglecting initial pilot projects. The experience of Iran in land reclamation similarly stresses the need of pilot projects, and the Clapp Report of the United Nations Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East pointed to the same lesson. For the most part the capital will have to come from the United States and there should be no nonsense about the money being a United Nations fund. But the example of a nation using some of its wealth as a trust fund for its brothers may prove more powerful than propaganda or nationalism.

There is no certainty in this course. A small improvement in the lot of Middle Eastern people will probably make them more discontented. The riotous Iranian oil workers were treated far above the average of Middle Eastern workers. This danger, however, must be faced when it arises. Since the only alternative to encouraging the progress and long-range stability of the Middle East is to keep it in its present poverty and ferment, there is no alternative.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FROM ENGLAND

Hilaire Belloc, Grand Old Man

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW often hit the headlines of the daily press with some piece of audacious wit or cutting contempt for general opinion. Hilaire Belloc, so far as my memory serves, has rarely, if ever, done that. Bits of a biography of H. G. Wells have recently been featured in a large-circulation Sunday newspaper, with pertinent—or impertinent—hooey. That will never happen to Mr. Belloc. The names of Shaw and Wells were, and are, almost household words, even in those households where not a line of their writing was ever read except as dished up in some newspaper story. Hilaire Belloc, for all his big public, has never been known like that. Yet when in July last year he celebrated his eightieth birthday, tributes and appreciations were forthcoming from every side and from the most unlikely places: not only from the people and publications from whom they would be expected, but from others where the most one would look for would be a damning with faint praise. And now an editor, W. N. Roughead, and a publisher, Rupert Hart-Davis, have added a chord to this gratifying chorus with a handsome volume, *Hilaire Belloc: An Anthology of His Prose and Verse.*

One of the earliest printed "clerihews," going back nearly half the subject's lifetime, said that:

> Mr. Hilaire Belloc
> Is a case for legislation ad hoc.
> He seems to think nobody minds
> His books being all of different kinds.

Nor did we mind. We read them all because we liked reading what he wrote. As time went by and Belloc turned out book after book, all of different kinds, some of us became more discriminating, and even critical: we realized that he dealt with some things more happily than others. But we could always go back to *Hills and the Sea* and *The Four Men* and *The Cruise of the Nona.*

★

IN HIS prose selections Mr. Roughead gives us nothing from the political and sociological writings or from the "novels"—wisely; nothing from the longer and more ambitious historical works—more wisely; nothing from the polemical religious writings—most wisely. These are all striking achievements—or were in their day—and very important parts of Belloc; but I hazard the opinion that, with certain exceptions, such as *The Servile State,* he will not be remembered by them. On the other hand there are at least two reminders for which I am specially grateful to Mr. Roughead: first, *The Girondin,* a novel of the French Revolution that has all the straightforwardness and a hundred times the wit and feeling of Defoe; then, *The Eyewitness,* that collection of reconstructions of historical moments that nobody but Belloc could have done so well. Here Mr. Roughead would have further encouraged American readers had he included among his excerpts, "Saratoga. October 6, 1777": ". . . the garrison piled arms and the history of the world was changed."

Belloc's first published book, in 1896, was *Verses and Sonnets,* and that surely was as it should be: he was twenty-six then, and at that age rightminded young men write verse, or at any rate would like to. And though the *corpus* of his poetry (if I may use so "academic" a word in this particular connection) is relatively small, if all Belloc had to be sacrificed, many would let everything go before the collected *Sonnets and Verse* (of which there was a new and enlarged edition in 1938).

Mr. Roughead's anthology opens, and opens well, with the "Heroic Poem in Praise of Wine." Mock heroic? No: grave, but lightened by a Christian cheerfulness; and in its end not shirking the heights.

> What said You then to trembling friends and few?
> "A moment, and I drink it with you new:
> But in my Father's Kingdom." So, my Friend,
> Let not Your cup desert me in the end.

Vain it is to criticize another man's anthology, so I will only say that it seems to me that Mr. Roughead then goes on to overweight his anthology with prose. For the rest, he gives us six of the sonnets (including "O my companion, O my sister Sleep"), "Stanzas on Battersea Bridge," "Our Lady of Czestochowa," "The Evenlode" (the lovely name of an English river), and some of the slighter and lighter things, including four of the songs—with their airs, composed by the poet himself. Of which pleasant surprise I will but say they are charmingly fitted to the famous "Tarantella" and the rest.

Thomas Hardy, I believe, valued his own poetry equally with his novels. It is well known that to George Meredith (by the way, is he not due for a comeback?) the least of his verses was dearer to him than *Diana* or *The Egoist.* Whether Hilaire Belloc loves his poetry in a similar way I do not know; but again I venture an opinion—that it will wear as well as anything he has written. In *The Four Men* he tells us, in the person of The Poet, how he writes a piece of verse—or at least how he wrote one poem (Mr. Roughead reprints the passage). It sounds authentic. That is the way, or one way, a good poet might be expected to write—not, on the one hand, by "inspiration," or, on the other, with the help of Roget and a dictionary of rhymes. And the emotion experienced, the thought clarified, the impulse received, the first item in Mr. Belloc's procedure is "My metre . . . given me by these chance lines that came. . . ."

"My metre." Throughout Belloc's verse, from the sonnets to the ballads, from the virulent scorn of "Verses to a Lord" . . . (with the unworthy but alas! not solitary

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

jibe at Jews in the last stanza) to the touching and true sounding of a folk-song note in "The Little Serving Maid" — everywhere the first characteristic is good making and good order: order in the most "disorderly" pattern (as in "Tarantella"), rigorous adherence to the chosen measure, generally a simple measure. The old categories of "romantic" and "classic," misused beyond the verge of meaning though they be, have their uses; and Belloc is a romantic—there can hardly be two opinions about that. But also he has a classical passion for form, and for exact form. So he gets the best out of both worlds, and is a complete human being: man the spirit, the creature of feeling and inspiration and prophecy, and man the maker, the creature of law, who uses his mind on what he makes.

Taking as my excuse an anniversary recently past and the excellent anthology published by Hart-Davis, I have put down a few remarks about a great English writer. But whatever "a typical Englishman" may be, Hilaire Belloc is not it. His father was a Frenchman; between an English school and an English university he did his conscription-time in the French army; if for four years he was a Liberal member of the English House of Commons, he was a French citizen for the first thirty-two years of his life. Hilaire Belloc is at least as much a product of France as of England. This has to be remembered when reading him. Indeed, it can hardly be forgotten, so often is he clearly expressing the thoughts and feelings, loves and hates, convictions and prejudices of a "foreigner"—and all in superb English.

DONALD ATTWATER.

An Appeal

MISS Adé Bethune writes: "Two Breton girls, of Roscoff, near Brest, have started their own small revolution in parish life. Three years ago the two girls began by just helping where they could. Today there are 14 of them. . . .

"Madame Daniélou's husband has come down with pneumonia. She has taken over the grocery store, of course, because business must go on. But meanwhile who will look after little Louis, Yves and baby Marie, and her housework? Home must go on too. . . . For the privilege of helping in cases like this, helping blind people, mothers, widows, cripples, the sick, the girls of the Roscoff parish put up with every discomfort.

"Last winter they were so short of sheets and blankets they just used overcoats to keep warm. They slept with a good conscience anyway. But their little place has become so crowded they are afraid the authorities will object. So their main problem right now is their own lodging. They have a generous offer of a house, old and large and in good condition. But they also need to raise $7000 immediately or they will lose it. They hope their movement will spread to parishes throughout the world. Help right now from American well-wishers would delight them. Contributions may be sent to: Mrs. Jean Aubois, 54 Washington Street, Newport, R. I."

SO THEY TELL ME

A Shaky Case for the AMA

WHEN I was a very young man I spent most of a year reading Irish plays and Irish and French books about the now-faded gleam of the Abbey Theatre. "Romantic Ireland's dead and gone," Yeats wrote, but few believed him then. Among all those readings, I remember some Frenchman's remark that Ireland had playwrights because the Irish believed in surprise. We, I take it, are proof against surprise. And one of the reasons is that our advertisers have immunized us. If you have a child of your own and watch her grow up, you discover that advertisements, commercials, have made her skeptical. Yet their ceaselessness affects her, and you and me, so that she is constantly driven to repudiate belief. Repetition has a contagion requiring constant vaccination. The copymen have bewildered our young.

For a man must believe in something, else his existence is without meaning. But Americans are ceaselessly the victims of war between belief and repudiation. They are like a girl who is being made love to—she has heard it all before; but it is possible that this man is telling the truth. But if she believes him she may be defrauded. We live, I am afraid, like that girl. Very little of what we are told gets documented.

Yet when I heard Dave Beck speak the other night, you could have knocked me over with a doctor's prescription. For the heir-apparent to old Dan Tobin spoke before the American Medical Association. He was strident before he finished the first sentence, and he ran raucously uphill all the way. Like the AMA he was in favor of free enterprise and the American way of life. His speech is not worth our time save for two things; who he is, and what the AMA is.

Dave Beck is the head of the Teamsters' Union on the West Coast. It is possible to introduce him, as Dr. Elmer Henderson did, as "one of the outstanding labor leaders in the United States." But, like Dr. Henderson's remarks about Socialism, it is a little more complicated than that.

Beck is the head of a union which is tightly run and which is about as democratic as a Hearst editorial. It is a union which is a virtual monopoly in many West Coast cities. It has constantly engaged in jurisdictional strikes, in raiding other unions, and it moves about with little evidence of social literacy, much as a pay-happy stevedore moves through a barroom.

★

GIVEN these facts, it was with a certain acid amusement that I listened to Mr. Beck plead on behalf of "free enterprise in the profession of medicine." It

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was his contention that "Patrick Henry 175 years ago said that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." The point of all this was supposed to be that what Mr. Beck called "government medicine" is a "socializing of the medical profession," and that our doctors must be rescued from "uncertain and clumsy bureaucracies."

It was contended, too, that on his visits abroad he had observed "the failure of socialized medicine." Therefore he urged "let us continue the voluntary way of doing things in America." We should avoid "state control, Fascism, Socialism, Communism." Mr. Beck had not finished when ABC turned him off, but he managed to say to us that he approved "the right of the doctor to practice his profession as a free man in a free society."

What I did not understand from all this is what Mr. Beck was attacking. I find a distinction, real, abiding and meaningful between Fascism and Socialism and Communism. I do not think words like these ought to be hurled around loosely. To do so argues to a certain lack of understanding, a lack of logic, a lack of faith in your argument, a certain falseness—and it argues to a desire to obscure, like a speech by Senator McCarthy.

I presume, though, that what, under the peculiar auspices of the AMA, Mr. Beck was fighting was a proposed plan for compulsory health insurance.

★

SURELY this is a debatable subject. My objection to the attacks made on it, so far, is that its opponents have never debated it. Health insurance through compulsory payroll deductions may or may not be a wise idea. But to attack it on the ground that it is Socialism and Communism—both at the same time—is surely to be mistaken, or to distort the truth.

I am indebted to the Research Council for Economic Security for a report on the British Health Service by Dr. H. W. Steinhaus. Criticism of the system is made such as this: "Soon after the launching of the British system, the demand exceeded the available supply. The cost of whatever services could be supplied far exceeded the estimates." And he quotes Mr. Seymour Harris, who writes: "Perhaps the most significant British mistake from which we might profit has been the introduction of *comprehensive* NHI before the required facilities were available."

This is a wholly different thing from saying, as Dr. Henderson does, that "a comparatively small group of little men—little men whose lust for power is far out of proportion to their intellectual capacity, their spiritual understanding, their economic realism, or their political honesty"—favor compulsory health insurance, sponsor it, and support it in the United States.

In the first place no public administrator in Washington has suggested that we adopt the British plan. To identify our proposed plans with the British plan is to be painfully ignorant, or to make calculated exercises in fraud.

In the second place the language of Dr. Henderson suggests, at best, that those of us who read it are idiots. So far I do not plead guilty to idiocy.

I would prefer someone besides Dave Beck to discuss with me either public medicine, or free men.

★

MR. BECK must be aware that our nation is in need of medical care, and that some comprehensive plan of medical insurance is required for millions of our people. His suggestion that this need can be met through the collective bargaining agreement is not true. For that solution I refer Mr. Beck to the essay by Harry Becker in the January issue of *Annals,* a publication of the Academy of Political and Social Science. Mr. Beck must know that Harry Becker is the Director of the UAW-CIO Department of Social Security.

Mr. Beck must know, too, that even if the labor unions worked out a satisfactory arrangement, that would not touch the rest of us. I wonder if he knows that Dr. Henderson alleges that in three years, ninety million people will be enrolled in the voluntary health insurance plans, which Mr. Beck approves. Does he know that Dr. Henderson, assuming the truth of his allegations, says that "when that number has been reached the problem will be largely solved"? Does Mr. Beck think it will be "largely solved," with 40% of the population left out?

I wonder where Mr. Beck has been living these days. He is not competent to speak unless he knows that the AMA literature is put out by the copy boys, by the advertising firm of Whitaker and Baxter for a fee. I wonder if he thinks that it is in the contract that the admen do more than write copy. They will write copy for me or for Dave Beck or for anyone if they are paid. I don't think that Whitaker and Baxter have added light or clarity to the problem of medical care in the United States. Whether they wrote the remarks of Dr. Henderson about "little men" and "lust for power," or whether he wrote the script himself, I think it is dishonest. I don't think it adds to the respect in which the medical profession has a right, indeed a need, to be held. I don't think Dave Beck added to the prestige of doctors, despite his florid phrases about the "hour of suffering" and "the arts of healing."

★

DOESN'T Dave Beck know that the AMA has imposed a compulsory assessment of $25 a year on all of its doctors, to pay for the ads the copy boys wrote? What about "free men in a free society"? Doesn't he know that many doctors—more than 40% here in my own county of New York—in our medical societies have refused to pay such an assessment for such a purpose? Are they suddenly disloyal, Socialists or Communists?

Does Mr. Beck know that the AMA has been charged, by physicians, as having a bureaucracy by trustees? Did anyone ever tell Mr. Beck that the AMA *Journal* prints very few letters which disagree with its party line? Physicians have charged this, too. In fact the editor of the *Journal* admits this when he says that it is not common practice to print such letters when they express the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

opinions of a "minority politically inclined or a socialistically minded faction."

Surely Mr. Beck would not prevent the expression of opinion in his union on the ground that it represented the views of an alleged minority. If he and his subordinate officers talk the way he did before the AMA he, and they, could shut off all dissent on the ground that all opposition is automatically Socialist or Communist. Of course, I don't think Mr. Beck would do that.

In the May issue of *Harper's* Mr. Bernard DeVoto quotes from two letters he received from doctors. One wrote: "As a specialist I cannot quit the AMA and its lobby without losing my specialist memberships; I am helpless." The other physician wrote: "Official medical opinion is revealed through the medical press, and the medical press is a kept press, providing as little freedom of expression as do the news organs of a totalitarian nation. Those who raise the voice of protest run the risk of liquidation."

If this is true, talks by Dr. Henderson and Mr. Beck make me gag. They make me gag anyway. I don't think debate about so serious a need as medical care ought to be conducted in that kind of way.

I think Mr. Beck ought to confine his quotations from Patrick Henry to dinners given under different auspices. Perhaps he ought to get elected to the United States Senate. There you can vilify anybody—Mr. Acheson or Mr. Marshall, for instance—and fold yourself in the flag and take refuge in Congressional immunity.

FRANCIS DOWNING.

The Stage

COURTIN' TIME

"COURTIN' Time" has for its principal assets Joe E. Brown as a New England widower bent on remarrying and Carmen Mathews as one of his four prospects. Mr. Brown, though not perfectly cast, is amiable throughout, extremely funny in a hangover pantomime, and quite reasonably restrained when restraint is called for. Miss Mathews is a fine actress who brings her own invention and authority to a part which is no better written than three or four others, but which she makes seem the gem of the evening. Her handling of a number called "Golden Moment" stops the show emphatically just before the first-act curtain, and even in a lamentably unfunny trio called "Masculinity" she is able to keep her own head above water.

If the show as a whole founders, it is because it has not had the courage of its original convictions. Based on an old Eden Phillpotts play, "The Farmer's Wife," the narrative and the inherent quality of the humor belong to that school in which charm, warmth, and character predominate. From time to time, the production captures something of this style—notably in a danced reprise of "The Wishbone Song" and in the sung version of "Johnny Ride the Sky." But Alfred Drake's stage direction, though skillful in its own way, is often overemphatic, and what is meant to be character humor strains unsuccessfully to sound like slam-bang gagging. The casting of Joe E. Brown, who replaced Lloyd Nolan during the tryout period, further complicates the problem. The situations of the play are not broad enough to take full advantage of Mr. Brown's own style, and Mr. Brown's style is too close to that of the clown to make much of the original character values. When Mr. Brown is let loose, as in the hangover episode, he is wonderful; at the same moment, the show loses its fundamental form. As a result the evening is indecisive, sometimes promising, sometimes feebly groping for just any effect at all.

In the face of this uncertainty of production tone, it is difficult to assess William Roos' book. There is, however, no problem about Jack Lawrence's lyrics: they're terrible. Persistently unfunny, and never very imaginative in the ballads, they seemed to me to create the greatest drag on the show. Don Walker's music perks up here and there, but Mr. Walker has strayed into one of those theatrical ironies: one of the few first-rate arrangers in the business, he has arranged his own music badly—probably too self-consciously—and his overture for his own score is quite possibly the only poor one he has ever done. The physical production is as unsettling as the performance: Ralph Alswang has provided bright, bold, cartoon-like backgrounds, but in front of them Saul Bolasni has put subdued and realistic costumes. (*At the National*)

OKLAHOMA

FOR ALL that I am a rabid admirer of "Guys and Dolls," I still remember "Oklahoma" as the most exhilarating musical comedy I ever saw. I am therefore doubly sorry to report that the current summer visit of the Rodgers-Hammerstein master work came within an inch of taking the edge off that memory. It isn't that any of the show's basic values has deteriorated—the book is still a remarkable one, the score hasn't worn itself out, the choreography remains the best ever devised for an American musical; nor is it that the physical production, or even the performers, are tired after all these years. The producers have kept the costumes fresh and the company young and spirited.

What seems to be the trouble—and what kept the audience I saw it with dull and unresponsive—is that over the many seasons of cast replacements and physical re-mountings at the hands of one or another stage manager, the original staging and choreography have gradually lost their sharpness, and finally point. For all the undeniable energy and good will of the present company, the things they do are either diffused or arbitrary: Laurie still hikes herself onto the butter-churn for a part of a song, but the movement seems more an effort than an inspiration. As I say, the production does not want for fresh young performers; what it needs is the guiding hand of a couple of tired old professionals like Rouben Mamoulian and Agnes de Mille. (*At the Broadway*)

WALTER KERR.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Screen

CAN'T HELP LOVIN' DAT FILM

SINCE THE highly popular *"Show Boat"* has been revived twice on the stage and twice in the movies since its New York premiere in 1927, it might be called a classic in spite of its comparative youth. Seeing this new movie version is like meeting an old friend with a new face; you somehow still love her regardless of her kittenish efforts to cover up her advancing years. Arthur Freed's Technicolor production is mighty handsome although a little more sumptuous than is exactly appropriate. In writing the script, John Lee Mahin pared off not only quite a bit of Edna Ferber's original novel but also some of the play. For my money the story could well stand this cutting, but some of it is almost in outline form now, and the character of Gaylord Ravenal is sketched so thinly that there is practically no motivation for Magnolia's falling in love with him and even less for her taking him back after the years of unhappiness he causes her. Kathryn Grayson and Howard Keel are very attractive in these roles and are in excellent voice singing such duets as "Make Believe" and "Why Do I Love You?" Perhaps that's all that is necessary.

I don't know whether Ava Gardner actually sings her songs, but she is extremely effective as Julie, the mulatto who is forced to run away from the show boat; she later becomes a lush but sobers up enough on one occasion to sacrifice her job for Magnolia, the daughter of Captain Andy who was so kind to her in the good old show boat days. Miss Gardner's big numbers are "Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man" and "Bill"'—both of which are first-rate songs and are put over in a manner that should melt even a heart of stone. Another of the picture's high spots is William Warfield's singing of "Ol' Man River" and and the liveliest entertainment numbers are furnished by Gower and Marge Champion, whose dancing has a nice style. Joe E. Brown's Captain Andy is in the standard tradition. Agnes Moorehead is properly dour as his wife. Actually I suppose it isn't the story for which we come to "Show Boat," so George Sidney's static direction shouldn't upset us too much. The plot is just an excuse for another hearing of the wonderful Kern-Hammerstein songs, songs that are just as fresh and welcome as they were in 1927 and will keep rollin' right along.

★

ANOTHER remake of an old film is *"M."* You may remember the original of this—an intesely sombre German picture in which Peter Lorre portrayed a psycopathic killer who murders little girls to protect them from evil—that is, from men. The new version, produced by Seymour Nebenzal, is set in an American city and follows the foreign movie, especially in the opening scenes, quite closely. But as the story continues, under Joseph Losey's realistic direction, it loses much of its suspense. We have no one with whom to identify ourselves as the terror spreads and the townsfolk become more hysterical. David Wayne gives an interesting performance as the insane man, and so does Howard Da Silva as the Head of Homicide, and Martin Gabel as the underworld leader; but the total effect is coldly analytical, as much without heart as a case book, and you find your emotions uninvolved one way or the other.

★

THIS COLD aloofness must be pervading Director Joseph Losey's work these days. In another of his films being released now, we follow his two unpleasant leading characters with a certain amount of interest, but with a greater amount of disdain. *"The Prowler"* tells the story of a policeman who has an obsession about position and money. When he is called in by a married woman frightened by a prowler, he finds her rather attractive in a hard sort of way. Then he discovers her husband is very wealthy. Their nightly meetings develop beyond the casual stage and when her husband refuses a divorce, the cop kills him one night as a prowler. Obviously this screenplay by Hugo Butler had "Double Indemnity" in mind. The leading roles played by Van Heflin and Evelyn Keyes are very well acted, but as the picture goes on and on, we begin to care less about its thoroughly unsavory people.

★

I'M NOT sure whether *"Native Son"* is really material for the movies. Richard Wright's story (about a young Chicago Negro who is frustrated in his efforts to get a job, and then becomes a victim of circumstances when he does land one) is a pretty grim affair and harder to take when actually visualized than it is in the reading. The stage play, which starred Canada Lee, was extremely forceful. I suppose the movie could be too; and many of the things it has to say about the relationship of underprivilege and delinquency should certainly be said. But unfortunately the film version, which was made in Argentina, is so awkwardly amateurish at times that even its intensely sincere themes are dissipated. Author Richard Wright, himself, portrays the lead; although his face is too intelligent for Bigger Thomas, he succeeds quite well in making us understand the anguish through which Bigger goes. As the wealthy white girl whose drinking leads Bigger into trouble, Jean Wallace is more of a caricature than a real person. And so are several others in the large but inadequate supporting cast. Although Director Pierre Chenal failed to get anything approaching performances out of some of these so-called actors, several of whom are embarrassingly bad, he did use his sets unusually well to convey the desolate poverty of Chicago's Black Belt. In spite of the film's shortcomings, enough of the spirit of Wright's book comes through to make us ashamed of conditions which lead to such tragic ends.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Communications

Wayward Crusader

New York, N. Y.

TO THE Editors: While in Berlin a year ago I attended an "International Peace Rally" in the Soviet sector. Among the orators I was scandalized, like many others, to hear the voice of a Catholic priest. He was Father Riquet, a famous preacher from Paris.

Father Riquet had only to use his eyes and ears to discover that the purpose of the outdoor mass assembly was not peace but war. On returning to France, he had the grace to apologize for a moment's blindness due to Socialist sympathies.

This was one instance of the Cominform's global drive to bring about subversion inside the Catholic Church. The method in East Europe is to set up spurious Catholic organizations which reject the authority of the Holy See for that of the Kremlin. The technique in this country is an appeal for loyalty among Catholic voters in behalf of a left-wing cabal which in 1933 usurped the name and leadership of the Democratic Party.

There have been numerous signs that one wing of the campaign has been directed towards indoctrination of the Catholic press. Among these signs I am compelled to rank an article in your esteemed publication for June 8, under the title of "Wayward Crusader." The author was Donald McDonald of the editorial staff of the *Catholic Messenger,* Davenport, Iowa.

I venture to suggest that Mr. McDonald, like Father Riquet, has permitted himself to be duped into giving aid and comfort to the most implacable foe the Catholic Church has ever faced; and that he has been decoyed, or has cozened himself, into taking arms in defense of American intriguers whose record is black with services to irreligion in Europe and Asia.

I have no quarrel with Mr. McDonald's disapproval of my work as a Catholic columnist, except that his attack seems wanting in at least one of the virtues—that of charity—which I am reproached for neglecting. At the New York convention of the Catholic Institute of the Press, I was greeted warmly by one editor after another, clerical and lay, most of whom I had never met. My reaction to their praise was humility for not having been worthier. . . .

Despite charges of caprice and worse, I believe I can attest, on my conscience, that no word I have written as a Catholic journalist has been knowingly untrue or unjust. Not one has been cowardly. I have sought never to compromise with an enemy whose avowed design is to stamp out the spiritual instinct. . . .

The Catholic Church is engaged in a war of life-and-death, the most perilous in its history. We should all defend it according to our talents, whether they be one or ten—and whether one is a front-line fighter or petit bourgeois. Above all, this is no hour for strife between rear and forward echelons of the same army.

RICHARD L. STOKES.

An English View of French Novels

By SERGE HUGHES

THERE appears to be in England and in France today a noticeable aversion towards a good part of the literature of the nineteenth century. In England, it has brought about a decline of interest in the great Romantic poets. In France, it has minimized the merits of some of the more important novelists of the age, among them Balzac and Flaubert. The nineteenth century, obviously, remains strong and diversified enough to avoid block-definition; yet by now the antipathy for periods of that age are so strong it has become part of our sensibility. Rightly or wrongly, it is another past, the seventeenth century, that exerts a great appeal today; values central to the authors of that time are in some cases replacing values which had followed them.

To Anatole France, Corneille was not a great artist, and just how limited his understanding was, was to be shown by Péguy. To some of the more lush English poets of the nineteenth century, Donne and the entire school of metaphysical poets were dullness itself and the absence of poetical genius; T. S. Eliot made clear the limitations of that view. Now there has recently appeared a work that adds a new chapter in the quest and transformation of literary values and a new evaluation of major nineteenth century novelists, *The Novel in France,* by the English critic, Martin Turnell (*New Directions,* $4.25).

Mr. Turnell's title is in part misleading. Although the novels discussed are those which appear in chronological order, his book is not the usual history of a literary genre. It is rather a discussion of those French novels which Turnell feels to be among the finest. A very personal history, as all worthwhile history is bound to be. Originally, the idea for the book, Mr. Turnell tells us, came from the very literary game of asking which novels would one take to that fabled island. The answers given amount to a meticulously detailed condemnation of both Flaubert and Balzac and the underlining of the superiority of the pre-Romantic authors such as Benjamin Constant and of moderns who did not follow in the steps of Balzac and Flaubert. Around the poles of Stendhal, his favorite novelist, and Flaubert, whom he judges to be the most overrated French novelist, Mr. Turnell places the figures of Mme. de La Fayette, Choderlos de Laclos, Balzac, Constant, and Proust. At the core of each essay is a moral interest, but that

SERGE HUGHES teaches Modern Languages at St. John's University in Brooklyn.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

interest shines through a brilliant display of critical techniques as Mr. Turnell very effectively uses the linguistic approach of Leo Spitzer, some Freudian observations, and the familiar *explication de texte.* It is a superb piece of criticism.

★

WHAT is the novel, according to Mr. Turnell? Appropriately quoting Stendhal, he suggests that "a novel is like a bow, the case which makes the sounds is the reader's soul." The metaphor is fitting. It retains what is irreducibly elusive and makes no pretense of imposing a number of pseudo-exact notions of character, plot, and setting. In the light of this definition, the history of the novel would be the history of a country's sensibility, that sensibility which has an historical-psychological basis and which psychology alone could not understand, especially a psychology with pretensions to a history-less, purely scientific basis.

The first novel discussed is Mme. de La Fayette's *Princesse de Clèves,* a work habitually avoided by most readers of French literature. It is an understandable neglect. In a century in which the need to know one's self became so pitiless and courageous, the figures of Molière, Pascal, Corneille, Racine, do eclipse the others. In such company it was natural for Mme. de La Fayette's stature to shrink, and somehow she was to become identified in most readers' memory as a woman novelist pouring out in stilted language the usual tale of woman's love, constancy, suffering, and purity. Mr. Turnell convincingly shows the glibness of such a judgment. The language is not stilted, there is nothing cheaply melodramatic about the moral dilemma of the characters, and the psychological interpretation of the persons in love is masterly. Because of these qualities, Mr. Turnell suggests that the *Princesse de Clèves,* with its restrained account of the failure of a value system that had sustained the seventeenth century, is the first great French novel. The novel in France then, begins with a story of moral failure.

The *Liaisons Dangereuses,* by Chaderlos de Laclos, one of the greatest horror stories of literature, and possibly the only great novel of the eighteenth century, is the second novel studied. This book adequately shows that aspect of the eighteenth century not conveyed by bucolic scenes and rose-fleshed cupids. It also reveals the increasingly complex love that can bind two beings, and together with the *Princesse de Clèves* indicates that the future of the novel will be in the study of the nature of love between man and woman, its moral repercussions, and its bearing on the destiny of the lovers. Because of this concentration of effort, the novel in France will tend to trace the history of sensibility with particular reference to this moral problem.

The third essay deals with Benjamin Constant's *Adolphe.* Mme. de La Fayette had made the predicament of the heroine the center of her novel, and two centuries later Constant was to make the man the hero. Not a strong hero: an over-cultured, schizophrenic man who cannot have enough passion to love and who does not have the courage to resist the rules imposed by what he knows to be a corrupt society. Already, by the eighteenth century, the number of integral characters in the novel becomes smaller, until the day when integrity is to be confused with simplicity.

Benjamin Constant's hero is broken because although he condemns society he cannot resign himself to living in opposition to it. But the writings of the next great French novelist assume and accept the separation of the hero or heroine from society.

It may seem strange, at first, that a critic with a taste for discipline, introspection, for nuances, should find his favorite novelist in the nineteenth century. Yet Mr. Turnell is quite consistent in his choice. Stendhal has many qualities of the seventeenth century: terseness, directness, and a flair for labyrinthian psychologizing. He completely lacks the sentimentalism and heavy-handed moralizing of the eighteenth century. He smiles at the scientific pretensions of his contemporaries, the realistic novelists. What is the peculiar nature of Stendhal's fascination? Mr. Turnell says that it is quite elusive, this quality, and suggests that perhaps it is the union of intense sensibility with an unrequited love for cerebral clarity.

★

FOR Stendhal's hero, a great love alone can justify life, and all the rest of it is nonsense, religion included. Yet, although Stendhal has no understanding of religion, for his anti-clericalism makes any dispassionate reasoning upon that subject impossible, he never has the arrogance of Flaubert, who learnedly condemns what he does not understand. Stendhal's novels are the fascinating accounts of persons who will be constant strangers to their surroundings and who will tend to be tragic in not very tragic circumstances. These persons are the unforeseeable ones whose lives, happily, are devoid of all heroics. The novels are stories of poets with a fondness for geometry, and Stendhal sees to it that the irony will not be wanting.

It is the lack of this poetical resignation and modesty in Flaubert which leads Mr. Turnell to write an acid essay on him. He finds in his novels many passages which he considers literary tricks and, more damaging, a spirit at first sadistic and ultimately turning into a willed nihilism. Mr. Turnell also remarks on the serious impoverishment of the novelist himself. Previously, men who had lived had written novels. Laclos, Constant, Stendhal, Mme. de La Fayette, had amounted to something in the world, had occupied a certain position in it. With Flaubert, the novelist banks more on literary experiences than vital ones. One of the first bourgeois novelists is the author of *Madame Bovary.* Flaubert did try to make a religion out of art but was not strong enough to hold off a pessimism so forceful that it turned a love of art into a form of lust.

The other great nineteenth century novelist, Balzac, is dealt with in the same negative fashion. Since Balzac is quite likely the most overestimated author in French letters, it is good that a careful analysis be made now and then.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Zola is not considered, nor is DeMaupassant.

The last novelist discussed is Marcel Proust. With Proust's work there is an ideal ending to the French novel which centered upon human love and its moral implications. The increasing complexity of love and society, the gradual isolation of lovers from all groups, the growing schizophrenia, and the sense of the fragility of all cultures, culminate in a work which proclaims the death of personality. Few authors have ever so eloquently conveyed the destructiveness of time and the impossibility of communication between persons. In the sixteen volumes of his novel what remains of the person is fragmentary and discontinuous. Only reminiscences can give to human life a semblance of unity. Even then the reminiscences must be art, an art which can deal only with the past. One can only live in the past alone.

In the tragic greatness of Proust's theme, Mr. Turnell sees one of the greatest artists of France, an artist-moralist in the finest seventeenth century tradition. The greatness of such a close made insignificant the end of one aspect of the nineteenth century, which substituted meditation on love, society and morality, with incantations, the cult of the vague and the exotic and the voluptuous caressing of a sad ego. In Proust the problem of personality has become the theme, the meditation of the modern artist. To acknowledge that there are artists who do not wish to be concerned with the problem of personality is to understand the tragedy of our time, for it is not technology alone that has brought about a passive levelling of consciousness.

In discussing novels of a civilization that belongs to every thinking being, Mr. Turnell has drawn a sobering picture of struggle, defeat, and fragmentation. Even if, in the history of the French novel, it is possible to feel that the struggle is between alternatives that are too narrow, the intensity of the struggle is still significant. Christians who are aware of the great mystery of personality and who see in the sacrifices made in a moral struggle a hint of strength that transcends the individual, will read these essays with care. Such struggles stand in danger of becoming increasingly rare. It is good to be reminded of them.

Social Action School

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER University of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, announces a vacation school of Social Action for priests and seminarians, August 14 to 25. "The purpose of the school is to provide the students with an opportunity to study the organizational and educational techniques which have proved successful in mobilizing the people for a solution of their economic and social problems."

Monsignor M. M. Coady and other leaders of the Antigonish movement (cooperatives and adult education) will discuss the spiritual foundation of the various forms of Social Action. "A workshop will explore the possibilities of using the parish as a nucleus for Christianizing the social and economic order." The tuition fee of $25 covers both room and meals.

THE CATHOLIC WORKER

June, 1951

Spanish Workers Strike
Michael Harrington

The Apologetics of Mammon
Kerran Dugan

Charity Deductible from Income Tax
Brother Franciscus Willett, C.S.C.

On Pilgrimage
Dorothy Day

Subscription 25c per year. Foreign 80c
Bundle orders, 10 or more copies,
1c per copy plus postage.

Free Sample Copy on Request

The Catholic Worker
GRamercy 5-8826
223 Chrystie Street New York 2, N. Y.

JOURNAL OF ARTS AND LETTERS

Spring, 1951, Issue

A Symposium on

The Idea of God in Modern Thought

Rudolf Allers . . . . . *Psychiatry and Religion*
Neville Braybrooke . . . . *The Impatient Mystic*
F. Mauger-Clement, e.c. . . . . *The God of André Gide*
James Collins . . *Kierkegaard's Vindication of God*
Justus George, F.S.C. . *Religion and the Intellectuals*
Richard Hertz . . *Theocentrism of Rainer Maria Rilke*
John M. Oesterreicher . . . *Our Flight From God*
Kurt Reinhardt . . . . *Nietzsche's Godless Universe*
Vincent Edward Smith . . . . *Science and Religion*

(Single Copy of Symposium Issue, $1.25)

Each article in the Symposium treats of an important aspect of the contemporary attitude towards God and religion, as this attitude is reflected either in a specific religious thinker or in the convictions of a particular group.

Three dollars a year (four issues)
555 South Hamline Ave. St. Paul 5, Minn.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books

Traveller's Samples. Frank O'Connor. Knopf. $2.75.

SOMEBODY who is handy with footnotes ought to get real interested in why the Irish, in general, make such lively story-tellers and why, in particular, they make better short-story writers than novelists.

This reviewer is not particularly interested in waving the Irish literary flag. But it just so happens that many Irish and some Irish-American short-story writers are among the contemporary best. Their names are well-known: Frank O'Connor, Sean O'Faolain, Liam O'Flaherty, Brian McMahon, Seamus McManus and others in Ireland; J. F. Powers, W. B. Ready, Richard Sullivan, Morley Callaghan over here.

That the Jews and the Irish share a lovely, traditional lyric gift has been offered as literary theory long ago. And it is also true that the Jews and the Irish have been forced, because of age-old religious and political persecution, to develop a certain masterful guile, or what Americans call "cosiness," which has lent itself admirably to the artistry of the indirect fictional method.

In addition, the best modern Irish writers have in their work a bite and a drollery unique to them alone. The latter qualities have been nurtured in them by the clericalism of their priests — a necessary excess when you consider that, traditionally, Irish priests had to play the role of both teacher and demagogue if the Church in Ireland was to survive. And these qualities have found further nourishment in the Jansenistic attitude toward the flesh which has been so typical of the Irish. Clericalism and Jansenism—these are the wells of inspiration from which the Irish moderns drink deeply. And out of this wellspring has come their characteristic bite and drollery—literary qualities, it would seem, which are in the tradition of Rabelais, Chaucer and perhaps Dante. Such qualities are the mark of the best writers in almost any society influenced more by the Church militant than the Church triumphant. They are the mark of honest and incisive minds which observe that anti-clericalism is largely caused by the excess of clericalism and that rosary beads, however worthy and efficacious, are never quite as numerous as hormones.

As for Irish writers and why they work best in the short-story form, one can surmise that the lyrical gift seems at its best within a small architecture. And in the specific instance of Frank O'Connor, it may be that his sureness with the serio-comic situation might, in the long form, become more serio than comic. It appears, too, that strictly on a basis of economic return, most fiction writers, Irish or not, earn more money from their short stories than from their novels. Thus, more short stories get written.

In his fourth collection of short stories, Frank O'Connor is again the sure-thing in modern Irish fiction—the droll insight into the genuine human being under the militant cassock, into the secret life of the passions which boil under modestly lowered eyes and blushing cheek, into the motives of mincing colleens and lovable tosspots, into the pub and out of the pub with maybe the bedroom after that.

It is unnecessary to comment further on O'Connor's art since one would be only repeating what has already been said by more competent critical minds. He is one of the greatest living short-story writers and what more can you say about him unless he goes bad—which he won't.

The current collection seems to lack the overall power of his most recent *The Common Chord*. But it is all even, thoughtful, regaling. Herein is "First Confession" a popular anthology piece which has the ability —rare in quality fiction—to make you laugh out loud. The best story in the book is a long one called "Darcy In The Land Of Youth." With O'Connor's stunning accuracy of dialogue and resurgent earthy humor we live again the old story of a nice young man's introduction to the facts of life while working away from home. Far from deriding the Christian ideal of marriage, however, the story delivers a most palatable fictional sermon against free love:

> "You don't mean you didn't want me to come?" he asked casually.
>
> She started. "But I thought you wanted me to," she replied, grabbing him viciously. "Didn't you, Mick?"
>
> Then he laughed out loud and heartily. "Holy God! And we could have been married the whole time!"

If you've read O'Connor, read him again. If you haven't here's your chance to tell your grandchildren later that you were alive when he was alive. JOE DEVER.

U. S. A.: The Permanent Revolution. The Editors of Fortune with the collaboration of Russell W. Davenport. Prentice Hall. $3.75.

THE editors of *Fortune* have written a vigorous affirmation of America. In his introduction, Russell Davenport apologizes if it sounds so glowing as to be offensive to people of other countries. But the authors believe that Americans have become confused and apathetic about their place in the world because they do not understand the essential "meaning" of America. This book, largely a reprint of the February issue of *Fortune*, is an attempt to explain that meaning.

The United States is more than a uniquely prosperous country with the highest standard of living the world has ever seen. It is also a nation with the greatest of moral and spiritual traditions. The USA is a permanent revolution of the human spirit, constantly extending the frontiers of individual freedom. The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fundamental proposition underlying the nation's existence is the sacredness of the free individual, a principle grounded in the equality of all men before God. The most trenchant summary of American belief, the authors find, is "Man is endowed by his Creator with certain inalienable rights, and among these rights are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

This is the essence of the "American Proposition," and it has universal significance. But the United States has made itself the custodian of these principles and has always assumed the responsibility of guarding and helping to extend them to other areas of the globe. Our present foreign policy must be guided by this historic mission, for in Emerson's words, "The Office of America is to liberate."

In this country the Proposition is realized through the American System, the particular governmental forms established by the Founding Fathers. The Founding Fathers knew more about political philosophy than any men up to their time and "political philosophy has made absolutely no progress in its essentials from the time when Adams, Jefferson, Hamilton, and Madison were its world masters to the present." Therefore, the authors believe "not only that our system is the best for America, but that the principles [on which it is based] must be rediscovered and implemented by any people anywhere who take liberty seriously."

If the authors designed this analysis of American political theory merely as a pep talk to give their readers the required fighting faith in America, this may be all that is necessary. Their explanation is made up of the familiar generalities of commencement addresses, a heady appeal to the traditions of our all-wise forefathers, and an ego-satisfying faith in ourselves. But despite the abundance of capitalized phrases and sententious definitions, even the authors recognize that their analysis has little concrete meaning in today's complex society. In a later chapter, they try to translate "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" into terms more meaningful to the twentieth century. They offer the explanation that "liberty" is the political right to protection against injustice, "the pursuit of happiness" is the cultural and spiritual right of the individual to fulfill himself, and "life" is the economic right to earn a living. Although they acknowledge that this interpretation may strike panic into the hearts of historians of the Constitutional period, they believe that it explains modern realities and verifies the Founders' intuitive wisdom.

After this skirmish with the meaning of America, the authors go on to the more congenial task of surveying some of the institutions through which America is carrying on its permanent revolution—capitalism, the labor movement, political parties, and voluntary associations.

In every area, but particularly in the business community, they find an increasing sense of social responsibility. American capitalism is concerned with the material and psychological welfare of its employees and the attitude of the public, and it makes its decisions in the light of the national interest. As a consequence it has transformed the nineteenth century robber-baron economy into a responsible structure that many a state planner would envy. The American labor movement, overwhelmingly anti-proletarian and committed to an acceptance of capitalism, has aided in the transformation; nevertheless it is still somewhat greedier and less responsible than management.

THE book appears to be a rebuttal to the jaundiced criticisms of American intellectuals. "Our effort in every case," Mr. Davenport states, "was to portray these [American realities] in their positive aspects." Unfortunately this laudable intention leads to indiscriminate praise. The rapid pace of American life, even standardization and conformity, become virtues, for they are conveniences designed to simplify living and free man's spirit for greater development. Somewhere along the line, however, another editor was assigned to relieve the smug tone of the book with a chapter on "The Problems of Free Men." Sounding almost like an intellectual himself, he admits that standardization in education, communication, and entertainment can make conformity a habit which "tends to restrict the freedom to change."

CAROL H. WEISS.

The England of Elizabeth. A. L. Rowse. Macmillan. $6.50.

MR. A. L. Rowse, as we are several times informed in this book, is a Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford. All Souls is a unique survival from pre-Reformation times, a college composed entirely of scholars who are not hampered in their studies by the presence of undergraduate students (who have to be taught) and who can pursue their own interests in ease, dignity and comfort. It is a select and very distinguished society, hand-picked from the most brilliant of Oxford scholars, but not remarkable for its humility.

In *The England of Elizabeth,* Mr. Rowse sets out to give "a portrait" of an age. It is in many ways a fine achievement, resembling one of those fascinating Elizabethan pictures wherein something is happening everywhere at once. Mr. Rowse has a great gift for selecting effective incident and quotation; his interests are wide; he writes with zest; his reading is vast; and he knows his England from end to end. This book will be of great use to anyone interested in the age, though it will mean more to those who have already a fair knowledge. It supplements and unites the separate and specialized studies gathered in that other great account of the age, *Shakespeare's England,* and it will assuredly figure in all lists of "Books Recommended."

Nevertheless there are disadvantages in Mr. Rowse's treatment of his subject. The Elizabethan age covered nearly half a century of changes as rapid and as far-reaching as in the Victorian age. It is sometimes difficult for the reader to realize these changes amid all the vivid detail. One has the impression less of growth and development than of the scurrying activity of a disturbed ants' nest.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr. Rowse has immense admiration for the achievements of the Elizabethans which somewhat blinds him to their less attractive features. He says little of the state of the very poor or of that sense of utter frustration and disillusion which was so prevalent in the last decade of the reign. Moreover an age should be judged not only by its achievements but also by its legacies. Today, for instance, we are less impressed by the glories of the Victorian Age than by the headaches of its grandsons.

In some ways Mr. Rowse's vision is more limited than he realizes. He claims to write about matters of religion objectively and as an outsider. Actually he poses as the Practical Pagan interested only in the tangible; spiritual and doctrinal matters move him to a sneering contempt which is far from objective or indeed scholarly. He wholeheartedly approves of the compromise of the Elizabethan Church as a "blessed balance between Crown and gentry that made for the success of the age;" but his chapter on that institution is one of the most decisive (though unconscious) condemnations yet written. Mr. Rowse laments the wholesale destruction of medieval art with the comment "alas that people should take their absurd beliefs so seriously!" Martyrs disgust him: his comment on Edmund Campion is that "he might have had a useful career and done good service in the English Church." However, Mr. Rowse does admit that "the Christian myth has been a wonderfully creative one, the most creative that Europe has ever known, or is ever likely to know." Indeed, among its creations was All Souls' College in Oxford. G. B. HARRISON.

The Genius of Europe. Havelock Ellis. Rinehart. $3.

THIS is a book published more than ten years after the author's death and consisting of essays written during the first quarter of the century. The author, whose fame is based mainly on a volume on the psychology of sex, aimed at formulating the national characteristics of the leading countries of Europe. About half of the book is, however, devoted to the "Genius of Russia," while the rest is concerned with Great Britain, France, Spain and Germany.

In our day when the anthropologists and sociologists have worked out a manner of presenting a nation's culture (this is the modern term for the author's "genius") by looking at it as a whole consisting of interdependent parts grouped around a central theme, Ellis' presentation looks quite out of date. He jumps from one phase of social and cultural life to another, without visible order. Nevertheless, his lengthy essay on Russia is worthwhile since it gives an adequate picture of Russia prior to the Revolution. This is an image quite at variance with the distortion of Russia now prevailing, an image formed by turning from the horrors and stupidities of Stalin's Russia and explaining them by imaginary traits believed to be ingrained in Russia's soul.

Russia, says Ellis, in contrast to Germany, never was conscious of the

Current Authors

During the first six months of this year The Commonweal has published the views of such contributors as:

Julie Bedier
Joe Dever
F. H. Drinkwater
Jacques Maritain
Raissa Maritain
Francois Mauriac
Thomas Merton
Sean O'Faolain
H. A. Reinhold
Heinrich Rommen
Nicholas Timasheff
Martin Turnell
Gerald Vann
Peter Viereck
Leo R. Ward

Special Trial Offer for new subscribers: 12 weeks for $1.00

Clip the attached coupon

The Commonweal
386 Fourth Avenue
New York 16, N. Y.

For the enclosed dollar please send me the next 12 issues.

_____

_____

_____

_____

6/29/51

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

necessity of an offensive attitude. The most profound Russian trait is disinterested human kindliness. The Russian population was not the least free and the least cheerful of European peoples. Men and women there were marked by their quiet strength, simplicity, frank honesty; there was no trace of servility; the ordinary Russian could exert himself freely within the circle of his activities without meeting with any social or governmental fetter. Obedience to an autocracy ruling despotically from above was not rooted in the Russian temperament. The Russian peasants and industrial classes acquired a great capacity for organization, self-help and practical activities as conspicuously shown by the *Zemstvos* (bodies of local self-government) and the extraordinary development of cooperative societies.

The Russians, continues Ellis, were essentially artistic people. In Russian novels, there is convincing sincerity; the Russians have a genius for writing memoirs.

NOT all sides of the picture of pre-revolutionary Russia were so bright. He points to the "orgiastic tendency of Russian peasants expressed in the custom of excessive drinking on weekends, to a certain laxity in relations between the sexes, to the conspicuous absence of the maxim "honesty is the best policy." Being the author of a famous book on sex the author believes it explained much to say that the Russian genius is predominantly feminine. In one particular point he is wrong; he thinks that the creative ability of Russian culture exhausted itself in the 19th century. He thus ignores the most spectacular revival of Russian philosophy, poetry, painting and music during the decade just before the First World War.

Having read Ellis' essay on Russia and knowing the essential facts about Russia today, one cannot but come to a definite conclusion: among other things, Communism has been a major cultural catastrophe since it has mutilated a culture endowed with enormous potentialities.

The other essays are rather insignificant. N. S. TIMASHEFF.

The Man Who Was Loved. James Stern. Harcourt, Brace. $3.

IN Africa, Major Oswald Perth Carter, killer of serpents, died of a serpent's poison, and the English colony, nobly enough, gathered in the bar to drink to his memory and the Reverend Arthur Virtue went about collecting funds from the native blacks so that the name of the man who was loved could be preserved upon a stone. The whiskey flowed like water and the stone would note that it was "those of his race in this town" who had helped erect it, but in the end it was four tall Negroes who carried the casket of Major Carter and the English boycotted the funeral because of it.

In three of the stories in this, his first collection of short stories to be published in the United States (two collections have appeared previously in England), James Stern cuts brilliantly and deeply into the British middle class, those who man the colonies, as in the title story, and those

The FIRST OFFICIAL

Catholic Press Directory

NOW ON SALE

Readers, Writers and Religious will want a copy of this complete reference guide to the Catholic Press in the United States. Published by The *Catholic Press Association*.

Contents:

- **All Catholic magazines**
- **All Catholic newspapers**
- **Personnel of Catholic publications**
- **Statistics on Catholic publications**
- **Statistics on Catholic population**
- **Writers' market information**

Libraries, Schools, Rectories, Bookstores and your bookshelf will gain an important reference work with the new Catholic Press Directory

Order Your Catholic Press Directory Now.

$5 *postpaid*

Book Service Department, The Commonweal
386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y.

Please send me the official Catholic Press Directory at $5. *postpaid.* ☐ Payment enclosed.

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... ***Zone*** ..... ***State*** .....

629

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

at home where, as in "The Broken Leg," Mr. Stern writes of the children: "Each of them had a pony of of his own to ride. They were dressed in fine clothes and fed on the best food England and the Archers could offer"; or where, as in the final story of the book, "The Woman Who Was Loved," Mrs. Turnbull, "unfit and embarrassed," made it a "habit" to see her children three times a day.

Neither fine clothes nor ponies nor studied visits to the children nor whiskey drunk in tribute are substitutes for love. Under Mr. Stern's pen, charitable though it is, the class falters, stumbling within the limitations of itself as a class, and seems to move further and further from a point where it might have been redeemed. In these stories it is the Negroes and the children and the governesses who endure.

These are the major stories of the book, although in the others—there are nine more—James Stern, a bright yet practically unknown master of his craft, seldom lets us down. Born and brought up in Ireland, schooled in England, a former resident of both Germany and South Africa, and now living in New York City, Mr. Stern writes out of all these locales.

"Our Father" is the tender story of two German boys at the close of World War I who grow to love the man who has come to live with them when their father is reported missing, "to keep our mother company in our father's absence," and of the sudden return into this home of the father at war's end.

"Something Wrong" is a story of loneliness, of a boy's growing up, but growing in a direction that perhaps is not quite right.

In only one story, I think, does the result not quite justify the effort, "Next Door to Death." Here, the considerations of a man nearing death in a hospital do not seem to add up to a story.

But this does not detract from a talent that is fresh and a good thing to see. The words are right, the man is serious, and certainly he entertains.

JOHN A. LYNCH.

• REVIEWERS •

JOE DEVER is the author of the recent novel, *A Certain Widow.*

CAROL H. WEISS, who completed graduate studies in political science at Columbia, is now associated with the New York headquarters of the Girl Scouts of America.

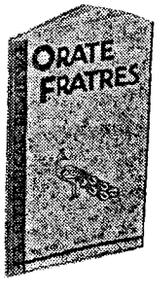
G. B. HARRISON is a professor of English literature at the University of Michigan.

N. S. TIMASHEFF, author of *The Great Retreat* and *The Laws of Soviet Russia,* is a member of the Fordham University faculty.

JOHN A. LYNCH is a critic and short-story writer whose home is in Birmingham, Michigan.

"The most pressing duty of Christians is to live the liturgical life, and increase and cherish its supernatural spirit."

—Pope Pius XII



ORATE FRATRES

Now in its 25th year of recognized leadership

The pioneer liturgical review in English. Explains the liturgy of the Church and offers practical suggestions for daily sharing in the "indispensable source of the true Christian spirit."

Published monthly

U. S. and possessions: 1 year: $2.50; 2 years: $4.25
Canada and foreign: 1 year: $3.00; 2 years: $5.25

ORATE FRATRES
Collegeville, Minnesota

CAMP WE-HA-KEE
On Green Bay
Marinette, Wisconsin
For Girls 6-16
Conducted by Dominican Sisters, Sinsinawa, Wisconsin
1951 Season June 27-August 22, $350.
For information write
Sister David O'Leary, 192 Ridge Ave., Winnetka, Ill.

LAVAL UNIVERSITY
Quebec, Capital of French Canada
Summer Courses (June 26th-August 4th)
Department of French (all courses in French)
Department of Spanish (all courses in Spanish)
School of Philosophy (courses in English)
Please write for program and information to:
Secrétariat des cours d'été, Université Laval,
Québec, Canada.

FOR FRIENDS ABROAD

Foreign exchange restrictions make it difficult to subscribe to The Commonweal from overseas. Friends and relatives who are abroad therefore find Commonweal gift subscriptions doubly welcome. $1 extra a year for postage outside Latin America.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If you move, even for a few weeks in the summer, have THE COMMONWEAL follow you without missing an issue. Change of address notice should be sent at least three weeks ahead. Address Circulation Dept., THE COMMONWEAL, 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Colleges and Schools

KANSAS

ST. BENEDICT'S COLLEGE

Atchison, Kansas. A Catholic College for men conducted by the Benedictine Fathers. A Liberal Arts College, accredited by the North Central Association. Located fifty miles north-west of Kansas City, Missouri, on the Missouri River. Address Registrar for information.

OHIO

GILMOUR ACADEMY

Gates Mills, Ohio. A Resident Preparatory School for Boys. Conducted by The Brothers of Holy Cross, Notre Dame, Ind. Situated in suburban Cleveland, enjoying the facilities afforded by the city's libraries, galleries and museums. Distinctive rural-home atmosphere. 133 acre campus. Educational, cultural, and physical training programs. Fully accredited four year college preparatory course offered. Clases limited to 15 students. Brother Theophane Schmitt, C.S.C., Headmaster.

Classified

★ Rate for your message, 12½c a word (85c each for displayed lines; $1.50 minimum ad). Discounts: 5% for 3 times. 10% for 7 times, 15% for 13 times.

BOOKS

★ *Books: Used, Old, Rare.*
For Librarians, Collectors, Readers.
Huge Stock. Reasonably Priced.
Catalogs Free. Browsers Invited.
Want Lists Solicited. Libraries Purchased.
DAUBER & PINE BOOKSHOPS, INC.
66 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, N. Y.

IRISH BOOKS AND GIFTS

★ Books, Linens, Gifts. *Catalogs.*
IRISH INDUSTRIES DEPOT, Inc.
876 Lexington Ave. (near 65th), New York

SPIRITUAL READING

★ Dynamic miniature spiritual reading.
THINKER'S DIGEST
Dallas, Pa.
Quarterly: $1.50 a year, $2.50 two years.

RHODE ISLAND

PORTSMOUTH PRIORY SCHOOL

Portsmouth, Rhode Island, 23 miles from Providence, 8 miles from Newport, on inland waters of Narrangansett Bay. Conducted by American Monks of the English Benedictine Congregation, assisted by Lay Masters. Five forms, 8th grade and four years of high school. Standard Preparatory Course for all colleges and technical schools. Added opportunities in Mathematics and Languages. College Board Examination. Full facilities for athletics including sailing. Address the Secretary.

DELAWARE

ARCHMERE ACADEMY

Accredited boys' preparatory school under Norbertine Canons. High school only. Resident and day students. Small classes, limited enrollment. Complete sports program, well equipped gymnasium and athletic fields. Magnificent main building set in spacious 48 acre campus overlooking the Delaware River. Public speaking, orchestral and choral groups, social activities. Moral and spiritual guidance. Located at Claymont, Delaware, 21 miles south of Philadelphia. Write for catalog. Very Reverend Headmaster, Box 67-H, Claymont, Delaware.

NEW JERSEY

GEORGIAN COURT COLLEGE

Four-year course leading to B.A. and B.S. degrees provides a solid background of general culture and special training in one particular field. Well-integrated program in Liberal Arts, Fine Arts, Science, Music, Home Economics, Business Administration, Teacher Training. Fully accredited. Address Secretary, Lakewood, N. J.

MT. ST. DOMINIC ACADEMY

Caldwell, New Jersey. Country resident and day school for girls. One hour ride from Port Authority Bus Terminal, 41st St. and Eighth Ave., New York City. Grades 1 to 8. High School accredited by Middle States Association. College Preparatory Course. Guidance, Music, Art, Dramatics. All sports. Extensive campus. Write for Catalogue G. Telephone Caldwell 6-3660.

PENNSYLVANIA

ROSEMONT COLLEGE

Rosemont, Pa. A Catholic College for Women conducted by the Religious of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. Accredited by the Association of American Universities. Situated on the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Eleven miles from Philadelphia. Address the Registrar for information. Telephone Bryn Mawr 4514.

MARYLAND

COLLEGE OF NOTRE DAME OF MARYLAND

North Charles St., Baltimore, Maryland. An accredited Catholic Institution for the Higher Education of Women. Conducted by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Exceptional advantages. For information address the Registrar.

ILLINOIS

ROSARY COLLEGE

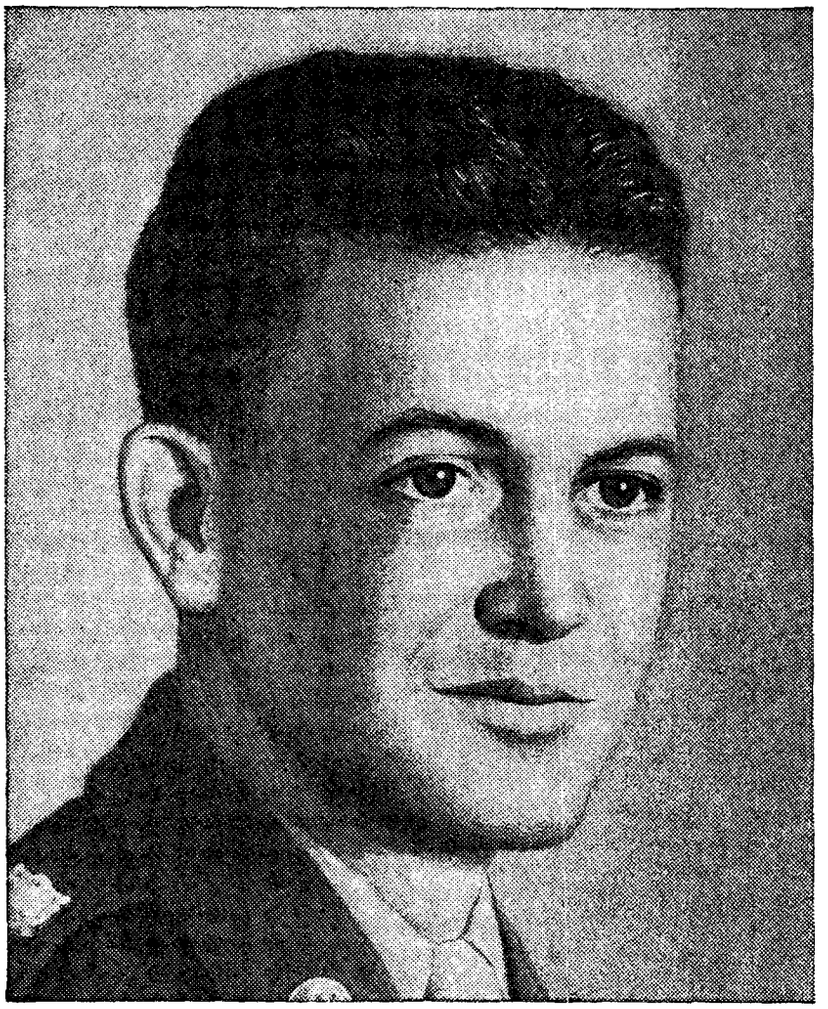
River Forest, Illinois. Conducted by The Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa, Wisconsin. Approved by the Association of American Universities. Liberal Arts, Home Economics, Library Science, Library School accredited by American Library Association. Foreign Study Branch for Junior Year Abroad at Fribourg, Switzerland. Graduate study in Fine Arts at Pius VII Institute, Florence, Italy.

NEW YORK

NAZARETH COLLEGE

Rochester 18, N. Y. Conducted by Sisters of St. Joseph. B.A. and B.S. Degrees. Liberal Arts — Science — Education—Art—Music—Speech and Dramatics—Secretarial Science—Social Service—Nursing—Medical Technology.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Medal of Honor

Master Sergeant Travis Watkins, of Gladewater, Texas—Medal of Honor. On September 3, 1950, near Yongsan, Korea, Sergeant Watkins was wounded and paralyzed from the waist down. Ordering his squad to pull out and leave him, he stayed behind and died covering their withdrawal.

Sergeant Watkins gave his life for freedom. What can you do?

This. You can begin today to do your share in defense of the country he defended far "above and beyond the call of duty" by buying more . . . and more . . . and more United States Defense* Bonds.

For your Defense Bonds strengthen America. And if you will make our country strong enough now, American boys may never have to give their lives again. Defense is *your* job, too.

Remember that when you're buying bonds for national defense, you're also building a personal reserve of cash savings. Remember, too, that if you don't save *regularly*, you generally don't save at all. So go to your company's pay office—now—and sign up to buy Defense Bonds through the Payroll Savings Plan. Don't forget that now *every United States Series E Bond you own* automatically goes on earning interest for 20 years from date of purchase instead of 10 years as before. This means, for example, that a Bond you bought for $18.75 can return you not just $25 but as much as $33.33! For your country's security, and your own, buy U. S. Defense Bonds now!

*U.S. Savings Bonds are Defense Bonds - Buy them regularly!

The U. S. Government does not pay for this advertisement. It is donated by this publication in cooperation with the Advertising Council and the Magazine Publishers of America as a public service.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED